

DRAFT Summary of the
Meeting of the NELAC Board of Directors,
including Standing and Administrative Committee Chairs
October 19, 1995

The National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) Board of Directors convened with the Chairs of the Standing and Administrative committees on October 19, 1995 at 1 pm by teleconference. This Board meeting was led by chair, Dr. Robert Stephens, of the California Environmental Protection Agency. The list of participants is given in Attachment A. The discussion was guided by the prepared agenda, given in Attachment B. The following summarizes the discussion.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous (September 28) meeting were distributed with the agenda. These were adopted by consensus. They will be posted on the (TTN) bulletin board shortly.

2. Recap of Huggett-Stephens October 12 Meeting

Dr. Stephens met with EPA Assistant Administrator for ORD Dr. Robert Huggett on October 12 to exchange information regarding the progress and plans for NELAC activities. Dr. Stephens noted that Dr. Huggett was very familiar and pleased with the progress being made by NELAC. He perceives NELAC to be a model for the Agency on partnership between state and federal officials with participation by the private sector.

In this context, Dr. Huggett mentioned the bill being prepared by Senator Baker (R-CA) which mandates implementation of both a National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program and a performance-based methodology system by specified date. It was generally acknowledged that the Board would welcome the opportunity to work with Senator Baker to ensure that he has the most recent and pertinent information relative to NELAC activities. Since the draft wording of this bill is not widely available, Jeanne Mourrain, NELAC Executive Secretary, will distribute it to members of the Board of Directors and Committee chairs.

3. Interim Meeting Dates

Ms. Mourrain recapped the scheduling activities, in particular, the accommodation of both the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB) meeting and the Society for Quality Assurances meeting on Good Laboratory Practices (GLP) which precede the NELAC Interim Meeting. She noted that the meeting brochure, including the TTN bulletin board information, will be ready for mailing by October 23. In response to the comment by Ms. Mourrain that NELAC materials will be made publically available primarily using the TTN bulletin board, Dr. Charles Hartwig, Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, noted that although the first plan had been to publish the standards in the Federal Register, the Constitution and Bylaws do not specify the mode of distribution. Ms. Mourrain noted that distribution of printed materials, is prohibitively expensive, as well as publication in the Federal Register.

4. Summary of LAWG October 13 Meeting

On October 13, 1995 NIST hosted the "Open Forum on Laboratory Accreditation" at the NIST campus in Gaithersburg, MD. Comments from Dr. Hartwig and Dr. Stephens, and written comments from David Friedman, EPA's Office of Research and Development, on the activities at this forum were discussed by the Board. Dr.s. Hartwig and Stephens expressed support for the model structure that Dr. Belinda Collins, National Institutes of Standards and Technology, presented as a good start. Dr. Collins requested that any Board member having constructive criticism and inputs send them to her before Thanksgiving for inclusion in the final proceedings.

5. ELAB Status

Nominees to ELAB that have accepted include Ramona Trovato, Milton Bush, Linda Christenson, Ann Marie Gebhart, John Henshaw, Wilson Hershey, Kathy Hillig, Cynthia Lee, Roz Rolland, Milagros Simmons, Thomas Coyner, Evelyn Torres, and Al Verstuyft. Frieda White has declined the nomination, due to other obligations. The first ELAB meeting is scheduled for December 4, 1995, just prior to the NELAC Interim Meeting in Arlington, VA. In response to questions, Ms. Mourrain noted that it is common practice to appoint an EPA official as chair.

6. Governors' Nominees

Governors' nominees to NELAC for the next annual meeting have been received from the states of Rhode Island, South Carolina, Virginia, Texas, and Kentucky. The Board discussed ways to ensure annual communications with the governors, including reappointment of their representatives to NELAC.

7. Bulletin Board Service

Ms. Mourrain reported on the status of the NELAC bulletin board services (Technology Transfer Network - TTN) being operated by OAQPS. The Board discussed the types of documents to be placed on TTN for public review. The consensus was that the minutes of all NELAC meetings would be submitted in a common format. In this context, Ms. Mourrain called the Board's attention to the format included with the agenda and supplied by Paul Schuda. She will post the minutes from the February 1995 NELAC meeting, however Committee chairs will eventually post the minutes of their own committees. Ms. Mourrain reported on the status of material to be posted in TTN (February Annual Meeting summaries, current committee status reports, and revised/new standards).

The Board discussed the implication of public posting of future Committee meetings, which is expected to encourage participation of individuals who are not Committee members. It was agreed that such individuals should be encouraged to submit their issues, in writing, to the Committee chair, whose address will be posted with the minutes. The chair then may elect to invite selected participation in the Committee's meetings. The Board decided to adopt the National Conference on Weights and Measures' policy regarding comments, i.e. to be placed on the Committees' agendas, each commentor must provide an initial analysis of the pros and cons of the proposed change. Carol Batterton, Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission, and Eric Rau, New Jersey

Department of Environmental Protection, will help Ms. Mourrain draft a policy statement clearly outlining the process for submitting comments.

The Board members indicated a continued difficulty with TTN pilot program, from an inability to log on, to confusion with the menu system. The procedure for Board members to complete their first session on the TTN was reviewed. Ms Mourrain urged Board member to contact Mike Ciolek at 919/541-4921 to resolve any problems.

8. Next Annual NELAC Meeting

Ms. Mourrain informed the Board that the Hyatt Regency in Arlington, VA probably cannot accomodate NELAC in June 1996. Individual members discussed their commitments and suggested expanding the window for the meeting from May through August. The annual OSWER/ORD Waste Testing & QA conference, and other activities anticipated for the area may pose scheduling problems. Additionally, EPA's contractor Research Triangle Institute (RTI) will begin investigating other hotels as a possibility.

9. Update on Replacement Members

For the Board of Directors, Dr. Collins has accepted appointment to the Board and is participating in her first meeting in this capacity today, however Ron Cada has declined, and has suggested an alternative. The Board agreed to consider this suggestion, along with others, for the next meeting.

For the Nominating Committee, Henry Bradford has accepted the appointment as committee chair and is participating in his first meeting in that capacity today.

10. "Double Duty" Committee Memberships

Some Board members received comments from various persons concerned that some ELAB members are also serving on NELAC standing or administrative committees. Following discussion it was agreed that this is something to be avoided in the future, but the Board agreed that changes not be made before the second annual meeting to assure continuity.

11. GLP-related Activities

The next GLP *ad hoc* committee meeting is scheduled for October 25, 1995.

Bob recounted his interactions with the SQA GLP group on October 17, at which he presented NELAC's activities. He noted that the SQA leadership recognizes that lab accreditation will soon be a necessity in the face of international activities. He also noted that Pat Royal gave a presentation from the SQA Accreditation Committee that is consistent with NELAC's activities, one that he could strongly support. Board members voiced the desire that a limited number of prepared statements be presented at the NELAC Interim Meeting opening plenary session, focusing on specific, substantive issues which fall under the purview of NELAC.

12. Next Meeting

The next meeting of this Board is scheduled for Thursday, November 8, 1995 from 1 pm. to 3 pm EST.

PARTIPANTS

NAME	AFFILIATION	PHONE NUMBERS
Carol Batterton	NELAC Board Member NELAC Chair, Education and Outreach TX Natural Resources Conservation Commission	T:512/239-6300 F:512/239-6307
Henry Bradford	NELAC Chair, Nominating Committee LA State Department of Health and Hospitals	T:504/568-5375 F:504/568-5395
Belinda Collins	NELAC Board Member National Institute of Standards and Technology	T:301/975-6455 F:301/963-2871
Marcia Davies	NELAC Board Member US DOD Army Corps of Engineers	T:402/697-2603 F:402/697-2595
Charles Hartwig	NELAC Chair-Elect NELAC Chair, Program and Structure Committee FL Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services	T:904/791-1550 F:904/791-1567
Fred Siegelman for Silkie Labie	NELAC Chair, Quality Assurance Committee FL Department of Environmental Protection	T:904/488-2796 F:904/922-4614
Gary McKee	NELAC Chair, Proficiency Testing US EPA ORD/NERL	T:513/569-7619 F:513/569-7424
Jeanne Mourrain	NELAC Executive Secretary US EPA ORD/NERL	T:919/541-1120 F:919/541-7953
Eric Rau	NELAC Board Member NJ Department of Environmental Protection	T:609/530-4119 F:609/530-5387
Bob Stephens	NELAC Chair CA EPA	T:510/540-3003 F:510/540-2305
Gene Tatsch	NELAC Support Contractor Research Triangle Institute	T:919/541-6930 F:919/541-7215
Mike Volz	NELAC Chair, Membership Committee CA Department of Health Services	T:510/540-2408 F:510/540-3075